

SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, May 16, 2024
Final Minutes

Present: Anna Heard, Jen Taylor, Nate Longcope, Leah Jack, members; Jeremy Mailloux, Chair; Jackie Mendonsa, Principal; Caitlin Sheridan, Director of Finance & Operations; Corrina Wcislo, Director of Student Support Services and Interim Superintendent; Public Guests

A. Meeting Called to Order by Corrina at 7:16 P.M.

B. Welcome New Members

Corrina invited the new members to introduce themselves; they did, and the other attendees introduced themselves too.

C. Reorganization of the Committee

Corrina invited nominations for Chair.

ANNA MOVED TO NOMINATE JEREMY FOR CHAIR. JEN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Jeremy explained the other SSC roles as well as their responsibilities and meeting schedules, then invited nominations for Vice Chair and Secretary. Jen volunteered.

ANNA MOVED TO NOMINATE JEN FOR VICE CHAIR. JEREMY SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

As Chair, Jeremy is already a U#28 Representative.

ANNA MOVED TO NOMINATE LEAH FOR U#28 REPRESENTATIVE. JEREMY SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

ANNA MOVED TO NOMINATE NATE FOR U#28 REPRESENTATIVE. JEREMY SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Jeremy invited nominations for U#28 Budget & Personnel Committee. Caitlin explained this member must be among the U#28 representatives.

JEREMY MOVED TO NOMINATE LEAH FOR U#28 BUDGET & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Jeremy invited nominations for Regional School Committee Representative.

JEREMY MOVED TO NOMINATE ANNA FOR REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE. JEN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Jeremy invited nominations for Policy Subcommittee and explained the committee's work.

ANNA MOVED TO NOMINATE JEREMY FOR POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE. JEN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

ANNA MOVED TO NOMINATE NATE FOR POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE. JEN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Jeremy invited nominations for Capital Planning Committee. Jackie explained the role.

NATE MOVED TO NOMINATE HIMSELF FOR CAPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE. JEN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Jeremy invited nominations for Collaborative for Educational Services Representative. He explained the role.

ANNA MOVED TO NOMINATE JEN FOR CES REPRESENTATIVE. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Jeremy invited nominations for Sick Bank Representative.

ANNA MOVED TO NOMINATE LEAH FOR SICK BANK REPRESENTATIVE. JEREMY SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Jackie and Caitlin praised SSC for such a smooth reorganization.

D. Public Hearings: None.

E. Review of Agenda and Perpetual Calendar: None.

F. Warrants and Gifts:

AP Warrants:

3025	5/14/2024	\$15,144.72
3026	5/28/2024	\$22,697.87

Payroll Warrants:

319	3/19/2024	\$87,109.08
322	4/30/2024	\$86,231.69
323	5/14/2024	\$85,053.22

Gifts: None.

Grants: None.

G. Approval of Minutes from April 11, 2024:

Anna offered an emendation.

JEN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 11, 2024 AS EMENDED. ANNA SECONDED. PASSES (TWO ABSTENTIONS).

H. Unfinished Business / Updates:

1. Capital Projects/Building Process - Discussion (Roof, Boilers, Kitchen Floor, etc.):

Jackie explained that tree branches will be cut down near the building so that the roof won't be shaded and exposed to more moisture. An invasive plant will also be removed by the school that can cause wood rot and shade. Steve Sullivan noted that the building will be painted this year and the rotting trim replaced. Next year, we need to push for new blacktop because the parking lots are in bad shape. The floors will be all done, so that just leaves the parking lots.

I. New Business / Discussion Items:

1. Discussion of Amherst School Committee debate on when 6th Graders move to Middle School:

The building in question is a regional building, so it would take all four Towns voting in favor of the 6th Grade moving into the Middle School. Anna reported that Amherst is moving toward talking with the Towns about how it could be more efficient for them, as they'd have to duplicate the administration for a school within a school to go ahead with the plan. Other Towns don't want to send their 6th Graders to the Middle School. Everything seems a little up in the air at this point.

SSC discussed the issue. Jackie noted that some 6th Graders are ready for Middle School, others not. It's advantageous to keep them here to develop them as leaders. On the other hand, having all the Amherst students together for a year before the other Town students arrive will only underscore the social differences that are in place already. She recommended keeping 6th Grade in as is absent the change Amherst is proposing (their 6th Grade by itself in Middle School without the other Town 6th Graders). SES academics are definitely stronger. Jen noted in her experience, it's incredibly helpful for 6th Graders to stay at SES; there are so many incredible experiences they have here they wouldn't get in Amherst. Anna said the Middle School is a bit of a mess right now, but if it gets pulled together under a new Principal and Superintendent, it could present some amazing opportunities. We should probably think about this change closer to when those transitions will happen.

J. Reports:

1. Superintendent's Report:

Corrina reported that she'll be Acting Superintendent until Shannon comes on board in July. She's already been very active and engaged. We're making an offer to Anne McGill-Diaz for Principal at SES. She has a varied background working with students with different needs. Continuing the tradition of performing arts Principals, rumor has it Anne is a standup comic. On May 24, we'll have interviews for Director of Student Support Services. Everything's going well and there are a lot of moving pieces as well as a lot of people working hard to make it all work.

2. Director of Finance and Operations:

Caitlin reported that she's at a professional development conference that's going well despite the bad weather (complete with falling ceiling tiles). We've looked at hiring across districts and emergency licensures, and it's been great networking with other business managers. Before that, she joined the SES Principal finalist at the school on Monday. It's always nice to be in the school with staff who are so engaged in the process and asking about the curriculum. Our community is great.

Fin Com Susie Mosher related that people have been asking about a farewell party for Jackie, who will be sorely missed. Caitlin praised her for being such a positive and pivotal person in terms not only of curriculum and school operations, but also for the budget process, which has gone so well under her guidance.

Finally, the budget passed at Town Meeting, thanks to Jackie presenting!

3. Principal's Report:

Jackie said our math curriculum pilot doesn't extend into next year, which is a bit of a snafu, but we can cover it with other monies; our teachers are very supportive of this. She wants to have a contingency plan, however, since not all Principals have a solid understanding of the budget (usually handled by someone else in larger schools). Normally, we don't want to use Choice money for curriculum, but it's appropriate in this case. She requested SSC's permission to use up to \$5K of Choice money to cover their math curriculum on a one-time basis if necessary. We have about \$200K available, with some encumbered for next year.

ANNA MOVED TO APPROVE \$5,000 OF SCHOOL CHOICE MONEY TO BE USED TO FUND THE MATH CURRICULUM AS INDICATED. JEN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Jackie offered a shout-out to the PTO event at the AC, which has brought in a lot of money to support student trips - bus prices are outrageous now. Our School Play is on June 6, a musical revue about different types of weather. PTO is providing funding for our Field Day, including a giant inflatable obstacle course (which the kids love). Parents decided not to take on the Spaghetti Dinner since it's a lot of work, but we'll have an ice cream social event instead. We'll have music and games on the school grounds and hopefully will earn money for the 6th Grade trip. 6th Graders will also present portfolios of their growth throughout their school journey at 6th Grade Graduation. Jackie has offered to support the incoming Principal in any way because she cares deeply that the school continues to do well. Jackie promised to let everyone know what new role she'll be stepping into next.

4. Amherst-Pelham Representative's Report:

Anna said at a Four Town meeting, Shutesbury and Leverett can only do a 6% increase in the regional budget allocation. Pelham and Leverett approved that allocation, but Shutesbury's not happy because it seems that the allocation method is not being followed correctly. Our contribution is different than last year, unfairly. In order to get the budget funded, Shutesbury is essentially subsidizing Pelham. We'll lose 7-8 FTEs in the region even with this budget, and we don't know which positions at this point. With a 4% increase, it would be even worse. Amherst is being a little squirrely, and it's not clear if they can pass a 4% or a 6% budget.

The disused track and field isn't usable, being lumpy and uneven. With cash in hand and a new budget projection, we can only touch up the track at this point. If they can make some allocations from the CPA funds in Amherst, we're hoping we can redo everything completely. A last proposal is to reorient the field north-south in order not to play into the sun. That's all in negotiation right now. We're trying not to ask for more money in an already tight budget, but the heart and soul of the project was to make this field turf and reorient it. The Amherst meeting to approve all of this isn't until the end of June, so we probably won't get all the relevant info until then. Michael Sullivan is the new Interim Principal at the high school; the new Superintendent will be making an offer to the next permanent Principal.

5. Union #28 Report, including Budget & Personnel: No report.

6. CES Report: No report.

K. Policy Review:

First Reading On:

- EEAJ – Motor Vehicle Idling on School Grounds
- GBEBC – Gifts to and Solicitations by Staff
- GBEBD – Online fundraising and Solicitations-Crowdfunding
- GBK – Staff complaints and Grievances
- GCG – Substitute Professional Staff Employment
- HA – Negotiations Goals
- HB – Negotiations Legal Status
- HF – School Committee Negotiating Agents

Second Reading, First Vote On:

- JLCD – Administering Medicines to Students
- BHE – Use of Electronic Messaging by School Committee Members
- CHCA – Approval of Handbooks and Directives
- EB – Safety Program
- ECA – Building and Grounds Security
- EEAE – School Bus Safety Program
- GBEB – Staff Conduct

JEN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY JLCD - ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

JEN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY BHE - USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

JEN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY CHCA - APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

JEN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY EB - SAFETY PROGRAM. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

JEN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY ECA - BUILDING AND GROUNDS SECURITY. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

JEN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY EEAE - SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

JEN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY GBEB - STAFF CONDUCT. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

L. Executive Session: Not necessary.

Jeremy explained that two SSC members need to be at collective bargaining sessions, which never go over the times set for them. Jeremy will continue to serve but he needs someone to serve as well. Nate volunteered. Anna will continue as the alternate. Leah asked whether the B&P representative shouldn't be on the Negotiating Committee. SSC discussed the process of negotiating in general.

ANNA MOVED TO NOMINATE JEREMY AND NATE TO THE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

JEREMY MOVED TO NOMINATE ANNA AS ALTERNATE TO THE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE. LEAH SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

K. Future Business:

- Shutesbury Policy Committee – Thursday, June 20, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.
- Shutesbury School Committee – Thursday, June 20, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
- Union #28 Joint Supervisory – May 20, 2024
- Budget and Personnel Committee – May 20, 2024
- Future agenda items –

N. Adjournment at 8:59

ANNA MOVED TO ADJOURN. JEN SECONDED. VOICE VOTES ALL AYE.